

# new mexico architecture

March-April 1978

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through France  
with Phil Register  
see page 11

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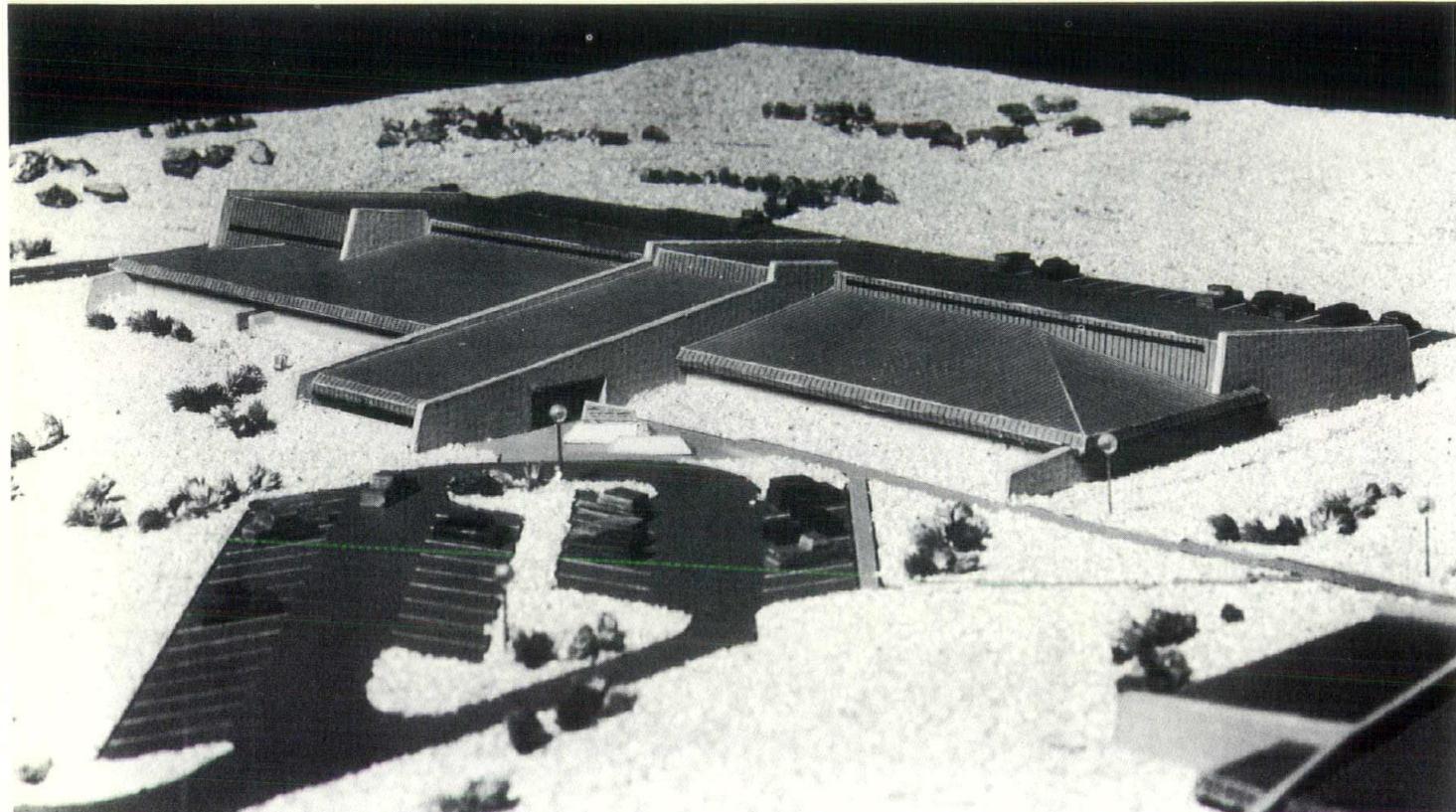


Photo of architect's model of the Training-Administrative Facility — one of a \$5.5 million, six-building complex, including a dormitory building, a support building, and three six-plex family housing units.

**Project Name** — Navajo Skill Center

**Owner** — The Navajo Nation

**Architect** — R. V. Lord and Associates  
Boulder, Colorado

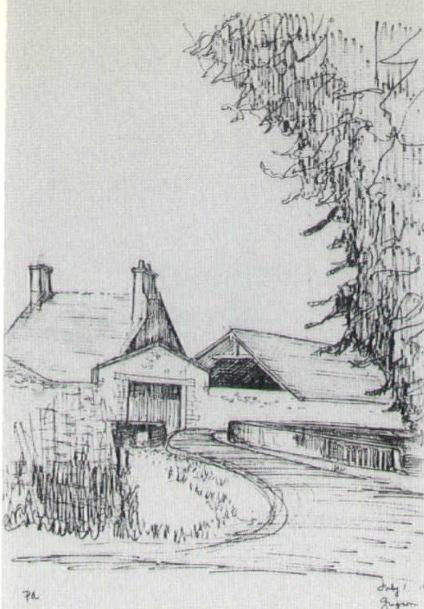
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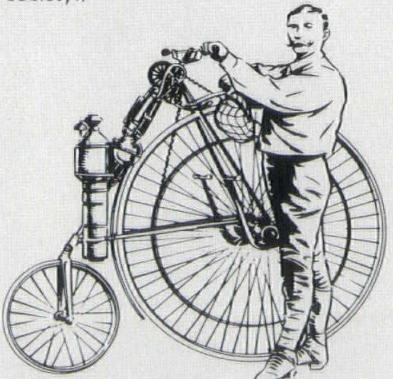




vol. 20 no. 2

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Philippe Register, AIA, vacationed about France during the summer of 1976. His account and some of his many sketches enliven this issue of NMA. Phil is a past president of the old New Mexico Chapter, AIA, (1961) and is in private practice in Santa Fe. (Note: the New Mexico Society of Architects was formed out of the New Mexico Chapter on January 9, 1965. Out of the single statewide chapter there evolved three chapters: Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Southern, joined together under the new state society.)



Edna Heatherington Bergman, architectural historian and graduate of the Architectural Department, UNM, provides us with current and corrected information about the New Occidental Insurance Company building in Albuquerque. See also her story on the "Revival of an International Style House" in the November/December, 1976 issue of NMA.

*march-april 1978 • new mexico architecture*

# nma

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*(A sketch — Paris — by Philippe Register)*

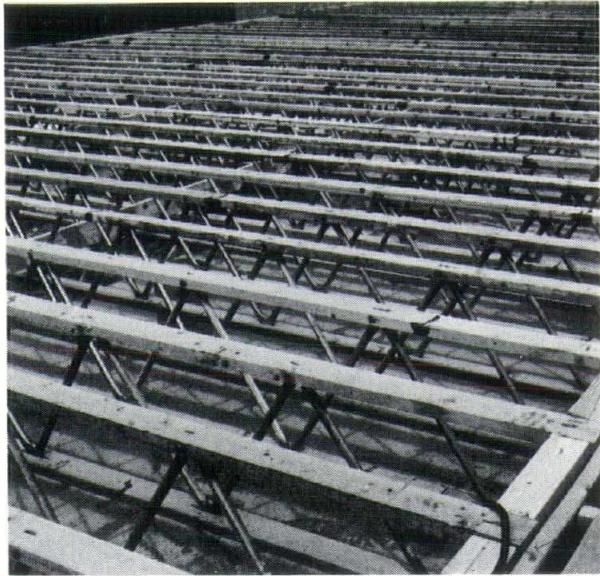
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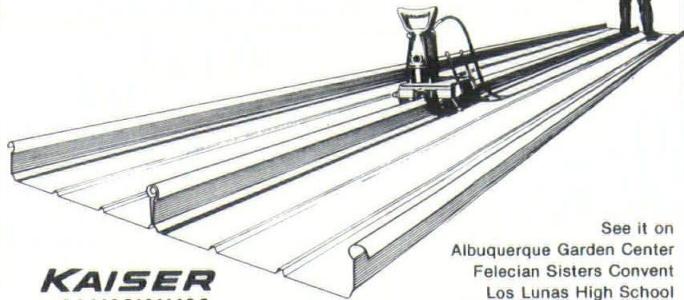
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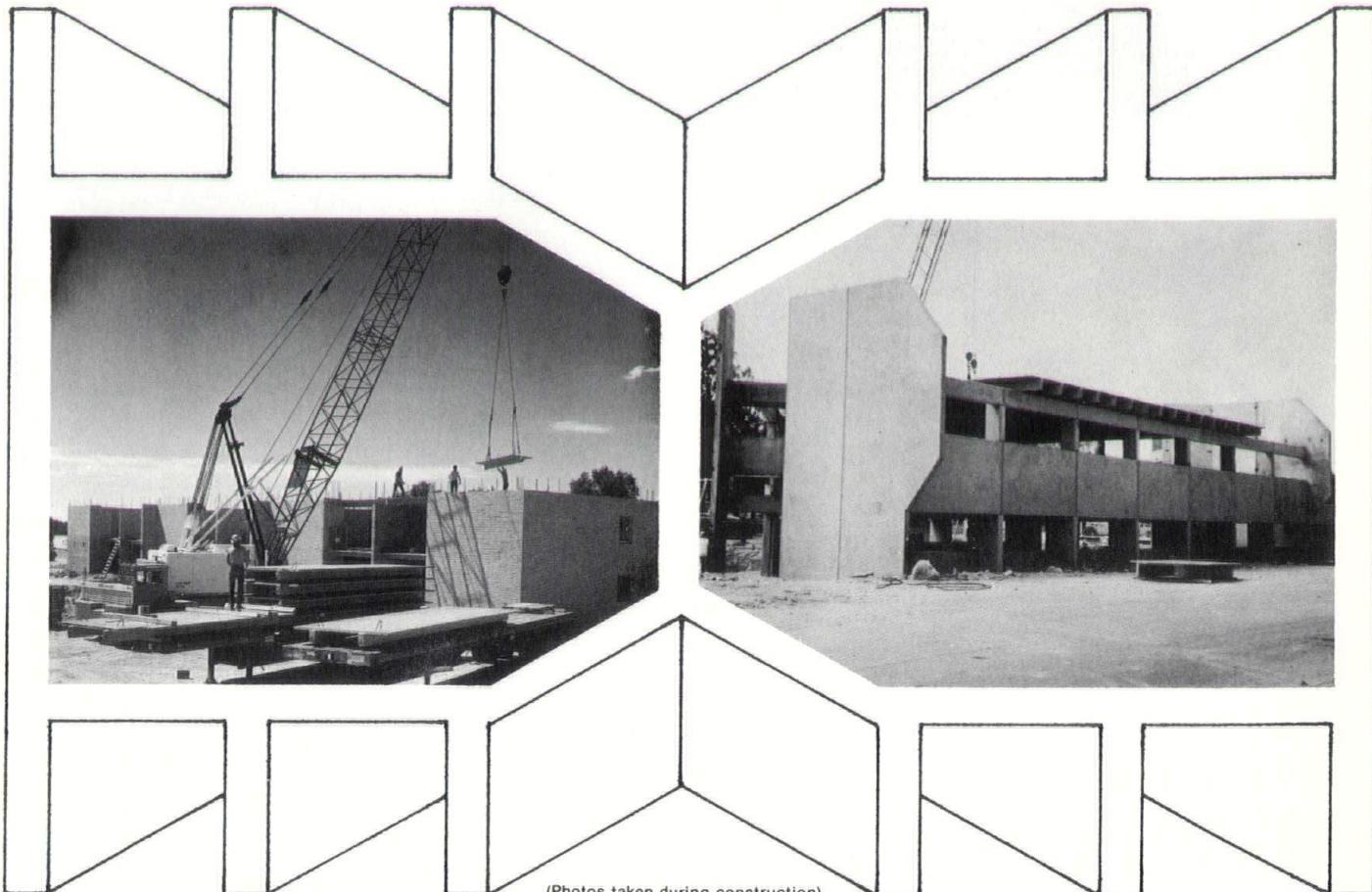
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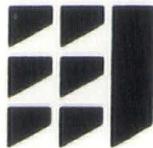
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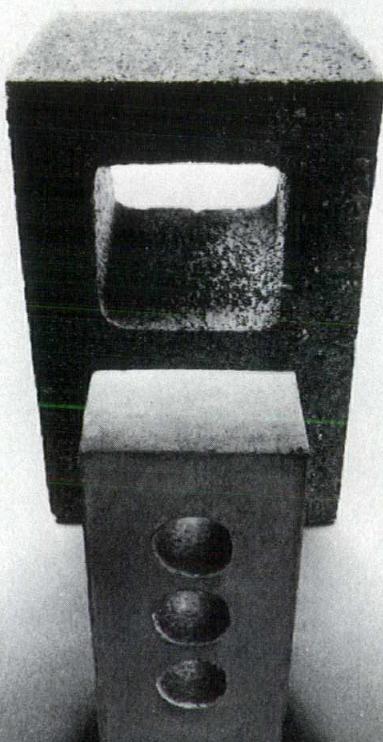
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# MASON CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF NEW MEXICO

## INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ESTABLISHED AT UNM

A number of activities geared to inform residents of the Southwest how various man-made and natural environments affect people are being planned by the recently established Institute for Environmental Education at the University of New Mexico.

The institute, the first of its kind in the nation, is co-sponsored by UNM's College of Education and School of Architecture and Planning. It was established with a \$40,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and a \$17,000 National Science Foundation grant.

"This program was established to promote graduate training of resource personnel to assist public institutions in raising the levels of a awareness, understanding and knowledge of the interrelationships between man and his environment," said Dr. Anne Taylor of the College of Education.

Taylor and Dr. Wolfgang F. E. Preiser of the School of Architecture and Planning are co-directors of the institute.

"We want to alert Albuquerque citizens and others in the growing Southwest about the delicate balance between man and his environment and the aesthetics and quality of the 'built' environment," Preiser said.

Projects being conducted by the institute currently involve various Albuquerque schools.

"For years, our children have been closeted in sterile, monochrome classroom boxes which house antiquated desks, tables and inadequate storage systems. There has been little or no relationship between classroom or playground architecture and what is to be learned by children," Taylor said.

Taylor is a member of a United States Office of Education task force which has been assigned to study methods in which 'built en-

vironment' education can be incorporated into school curricula.

At the Ranchos Elementary School in Albuquerque, students from the institute are working with parents, faculty and Albuquerque Public Schools staff "to modify a first-grade classroom based on developmental needs of children," she said.

The institute is conducting similar projects at the Sandia Preparatory School and at an elementary school near Gallup. In addition, "selected school playgrounds will be studied as to their potential to become both outdoor classrooms and neighborhood parks," Preiser said.

Taylor said a series of television shows is being planned to document and disseminate information on the Ranchos project.

Other activities planned by the institute include a conference on April 7 for members of the Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA) and other interested parties.

"The conference will assess national trends in environmental design education and give future direction to the institute based on other work in the field," said Preiser.

He said the institute will also send faculty and student representatives to an EDRA-sponsored conference to be held later in April in Tucson, Ariz., where several presentations will be made by both groups.

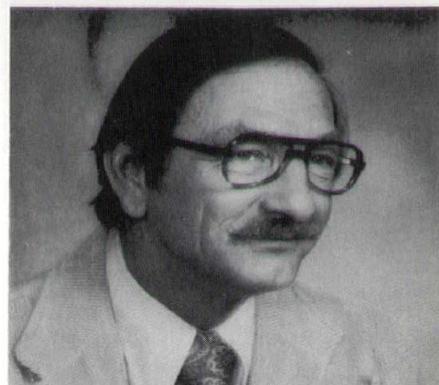
In March, the institute will sponsor a seminar on "On Training the Environmental Design Educator" at the National Art Education Association Conference in Houston, Texas.

The institute, which is housed in the UNM School of Architecture and Planning on the corner of Stanford and Central, offers a Master of Architecture Degree with an option in environmental education for students with background in architecture and education.

"The institute is an interdisciplinary project which requires

much voluntary effort from colleges and sacrifice from the faculty members involved. It is a good example of how two different divisions of the University can combine their resources to address problems of public concern," Taylor said.

## Mitchell J. Serven Joins Roswell Firm



The Roswell-Las Cruces architectural firm of Alley-Connell and Associates has announced the addition of Mitchell J. Serven to its staff as head of the planning section.

Mr. Serven has prepared long-range development plans for cities, urban recreation programs and state parks throughout the western United States. He has also conducted land use studies in connection with private business ventures. His outdoor design work has involved golf courses, marinas, street layouts in various development situations and the setting of norms for coordinated residential and commercial building.

The American Association of Nurserymen honored Mr. Serven for a substation beautification project he carried out for the Sierra Pacific Power Co. of Nevada. His landscape architecture for the Washoe County Library in Reno also won national recognition from the association.

His publications include a state-wide recreation plan for Nevada, an urban expansion plan for the city of Auburn, Calif., and a plan for a 124-acre community parks

Continued on page 17

# What are the facts about Albuquerque's Venetian Palace? (and what is the truth about its designers?)

an update by Edna Heatherington Bergman

The autumn of 1977 in Albuquerque was enlivened for those who are interested in local architecture and its history by the publication of a number of articles about local buildings and about architecture in general. *The New Mexico Independent* ran an entire issue in October and several followup pieces and letters in honor of Architecture Week. *Albuquerque* magazine, besides starting off a regular series on local buildings with one on the Simms Building (footnote: 1954, Flatow, Moore: the remarkable heating and cooling system, designed by Bridgers and Paxton, is of as much importance as the building itself, which was the city's first "high-rise."), included in its October issue an article by Bainbridge Bunting on Albuquerque's best and worst buildings. Continuing into the new year, the *Independent* has recently devoted front-page space to the Old and the New Occidental Buildings, two of the city's most interesting remnants.

However, persistent errors flaw the accounts of the New Occidental Building, the white terra-cotta palace at Third and Gold Streets, and some were even incorporated into the caption of the photo on page 13 of the November-December *New Mexico Architecture*. I do not know what is the source of the date 1924 for the construction of this building. There is, in the back room of the Building and Inspection Department, a simple log of building permits from 1913 until the advent in the forties of the present file-drawer record system. Bainbridge Bunting also possesses a transcription from this log of all jobs listed over a minimum cost — I think \$2500 — from 1913 through 1930. Permit 1162, late in 1916, is for the corner of Third and Gold, block 17, lots 13-16, Occidental Life Insurance Co., \$35,000 for a one-story building. No permit appears for the address in 1923 or 24.

Perry Wilkes, from his research in the city directories, gives a history of the address changes of the Occidental company: From the Old Occidental Building of 1905, on the southwest corner of Central and Broadway, "they moved into the Korber Building (now demolished) at 200 N 2nd about 1914. They moved to the corner of Third and Gold about 1917 . . ." (footnote: *New Mexico Independent*, vol. 82, no. 12, Jan. 6, 1978, p. 1) I think this evidence supports that of the building permit log, that the building was designed and built 1916-17.

Local Architect Louis Hesselden, who was 21 at the time it was built, confirmed Trost and Trost as the architects. The best information on Henry Trost and his firm is a paper by Lloyd Engelbrecht in the *Prairie School Review*, vol. VI no. 4, Fourth Quarter 1969. (Footnote: Dr. Engelbrecht, now at Wichita

State University, has continued his research on Trost and has found new information since 1969. He is to present a paper on the Franciscan Hotel at the meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians in San Antonio, Texas, in April, 1978). Henry Trost was born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1860, and after working as a draftsman in Toledo architects' offices can be found practicing architecture in the Southwest in the early 1880's. By 1888 he was in Chicago, where he was active in the Chicago Architectural Sketch Club and was designing ornamental iron work. Although he is not known to have worked in the Sullivan office, he certainly learned to design Sullivan-esque ornament, and some of his drawings in this style are in the Humanities Research Center of the University of Texas at Austin. Trost moved to Tucson in 1898 and to El Paso in 1904. Some fine evidence of his own hand in the New Occidental's design is the ornament in the spandrels between the arches. The Doges' Palace itself has blank spandrels.

My own history of Albuquerque architectural firms, derived from city directories, does not start till 1920, in which year Trost and Trost are listed. In 1921 and 22 the listing reads "George P. Hill, Associate." (From his own history in architectural directories, we know that A. W. Boehning, Sr., was a draftsman for Trost and Trost 1921-24). In 1923 George M. Williamson is listed as associate, but in 1924 (Williamson having set up his own firm) the listing is again simply Trost and Trost. The firm is not listed from 1925 until in 1931 they reappear as Trost and Trost and W. M. Brittelle.

William Miles Brittelle, Sr., was born in Imperial, Nebraska, in 1894. After serving in the army in World War I, he began his architectural career working in the office of H. J. Manning in Denver, in 1920, studying at the Denver extension of the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design. He was working in Pueblo, Colorado, in 1926, evidently still with the Manning firm, when according to John Ginner, Williamson recruited him specifically to be a designer; he remained as chief draftsman and designer until 1931. He described his position with Trost and Trost in 1931-32 as architect and designer. In 1932 he set up his own office in partnership with Ginner.

John Ginner told me in an interview a little more than a year ago of the jubilation in the office in 1934 when Brittelle got the remodelling job by promising to bring it in at a cost no higher than the insurance payment. The existing crenellated and crocketed cornice replaces Trost's original deep overhang. Brittelle also enclosed what had been an open arcade, considerably increasing the building's floor area. Brittelle was the designer of the old St. Joseph's Hos-



*The new Occidental Building at Third and Gold, Albuquerque*

pital, the President's Residence at the University of New Mexico, the Strong-Thorne Mortuary, and the First United Presbyterian Church.

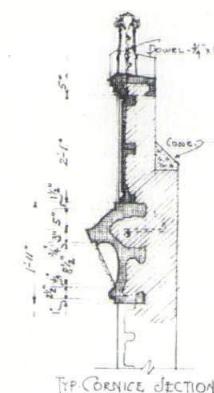
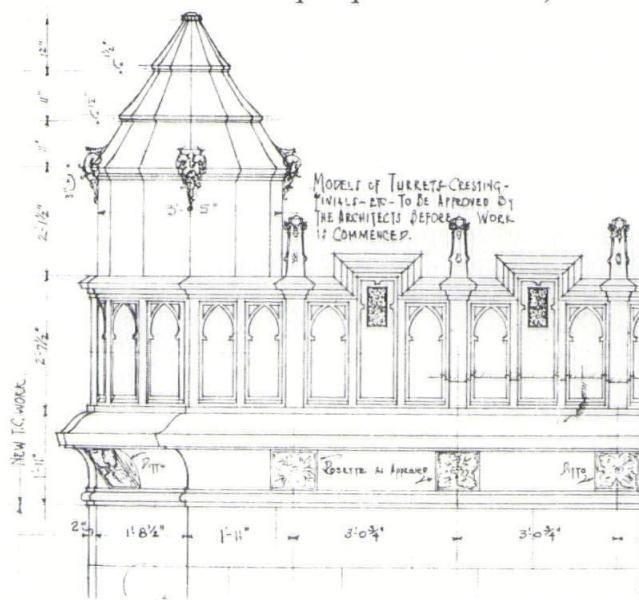
It is commonly supposed that the reason for the New Occidental's quotation of the first story of the Doges' Palace was that the client (and whether this would have been Raynolds or McMillen is not clear to me) had travelled to Europe, seen and admired the original. But Louis Hesselden told me that what the client had actually seen was in Oklahoma, another building quoting the Palace. This is one of my favorite stories about Albuquerque architecture, and

I hope it is true. Further research suggests itself: had Trost himself quoted the Palace in an Oklahoma building?

Postscript, February 22: I have just learned from Dr. Engelbrecht that original plans of the New Occidental still exist in a private collection in El Paso, and are dated July 19, 1916.

Dr. Engelbrecht is continuing his research on Henry Trost, and expects eventually to publish a long article or a book on Trost and his work. This will be a most valuable reference for New Mexico historians, as many important New Mexico buildings were designed by Trost. In Albuquerque, the firm was responsible for the Berthold Spitz House (Chaparral Home), the original building of Albuquerque High School, the New Occidental, the First National Bank, and the Sunshine, among others.

*EHB*



*A detail from 1934 working drawings by W. Miles Brittelle, Sr., A.I.A.*

## A NEWS FLASH!



### OLD OCCIDENTAL TO BE DEMOLISHED!

First Baptist Church  
elects to destroy

—a report by  
Edna Heatherington Bergman

On Wednesday, March 8, the congregation of Albuquerque's First Baptist Church voted to accept the decision of the church's Building and Future Projects Committee to raze the Old Occidental Building (see *NMA*, Nov-Dec 1977) for a parking lot. The demolition is scheduled for early June. H. B. Horn, of the committee, is quoted in the *Albuquerque Journal* of March 10 as saying that the parking lot which will replace the Occidental and two adjacent buildings will "make that whole block look better."

The Baptists, who have, like the downtown Methodist and Episcopal congregations, remained downtown during the city's sprawl and the urban renewal period, feel that they are demonstrating a commitment to central Albuquerque with the two-and-a-half-million dollar new building west of the original structure. (Brittelle and Ginner's 1937 church was enlarged with a wing on the north in the fifties. The new building is by Kruger, Lake, Pogue and Hutchinson with Richard P. Milner Associates). The enormous parking area, which already covers the entire block on which the church stands, is indeed significant in showing the great number of people who come into the neighborhood once or more a week for worship and education.

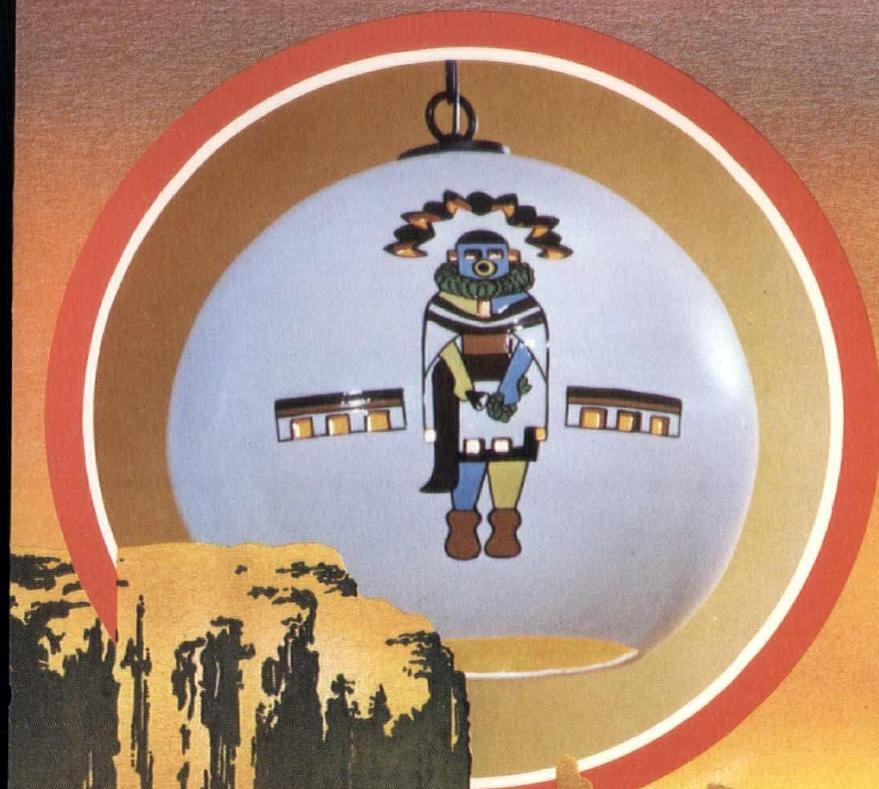
But although the Baptists thus feel that they are clearly demonstrating a sincere loyalty to Albuquerque's center, two perpetual errors underlie the decision to raze the Old Occidental: the inability to recognize its importance as an old and beautiful building; and the failure to understand the corner of Central and Broadway as part of its surrounding neighborhood and of the Central Corridor.

Beautiful buildings, as distinct from imposing, respectable, or important buildings, are very rare.

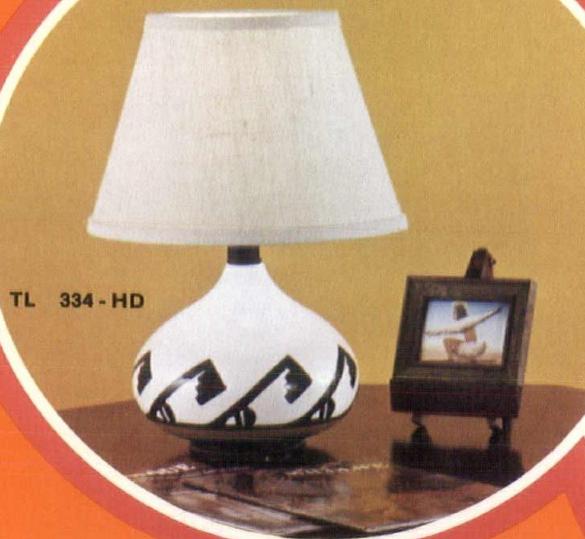
The Old Occidental, besides its significance in Albuquerque's history and its place in the city's fabric, is truly beautiful. Its beauty is of a type which cannot, after the changes of almost 75 years, be recreated. And its place in the city's history and fabric is not insignificant. This first building of the Occidental Life Insurance Company is also an important element in the texture of Central Avenue east of the railroad. The residential neighborhoods around it are just beginning to be rehabilitated, and the Central Corridor Task Force is just beginning to explore the possibilities for reconstruction of the commercial street which should serve those neighborhoods. Renovation of the 1923 public library two blocks east is now underway, and the fate of the high school campus between church and library hangs in the balance. To create a wide empty expanse across Central west of Broadway will further isolate these neighborhoods and will create a disconcerting gap in what should be a comfortable pedestrian and bus or trolley link with downtown. Instead of contributing to the dense, lively urban quality which can be the unique contribution of the older central neighborhoods, the church will be establishing itself incongruously in the city's center as a kind of religious shopping center, whose customers, arriving from any distance by car, might more conveniently and less destructively have been accommodated in parking lots adjacent to a highway exit.

Just as federal renewal investments, sincerely intended to bring new life to America's cities, created deserts of rubble, the church's investment, sincerely intended to "enhance" its neighborhood, will fail in a very similar way.

EHB



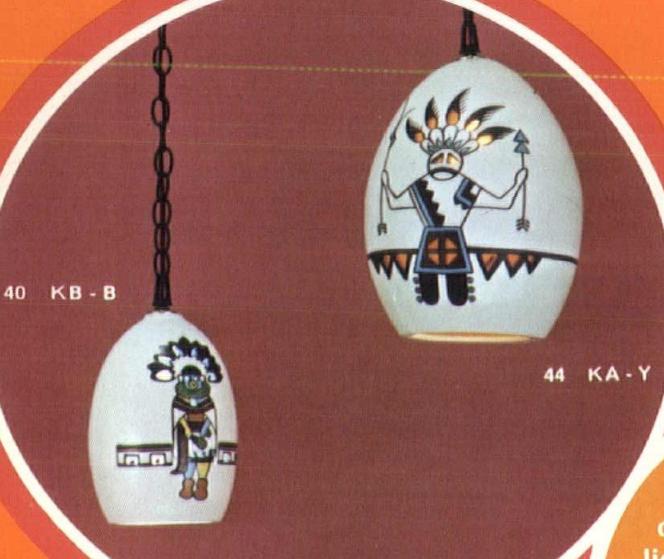
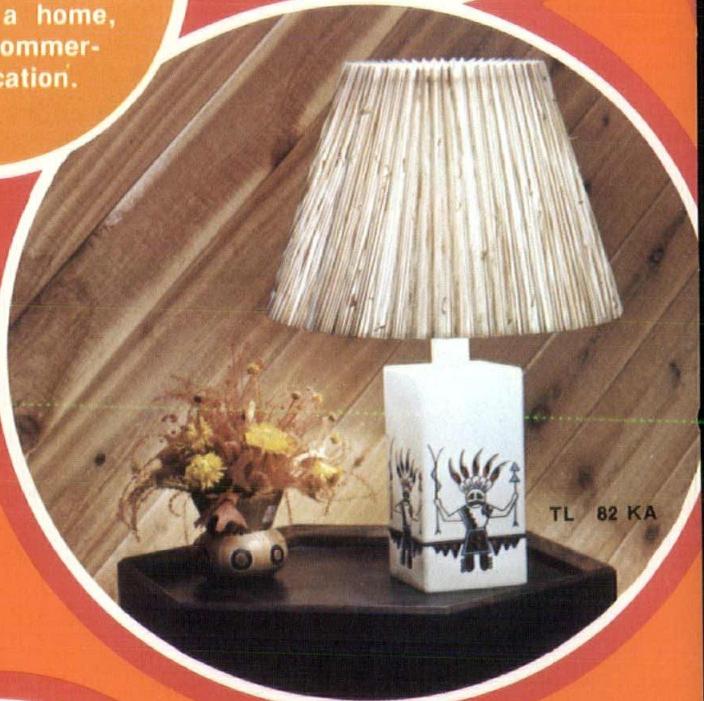
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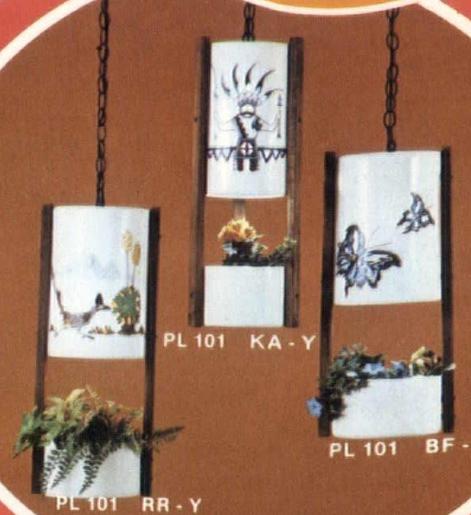
TL 34 KB

TL 32 RR

TL 15 KA

TL 21 MK

TL 32 KA



PL 101 KA - Y

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PL 101 RR - Y



40-3 HB Multi

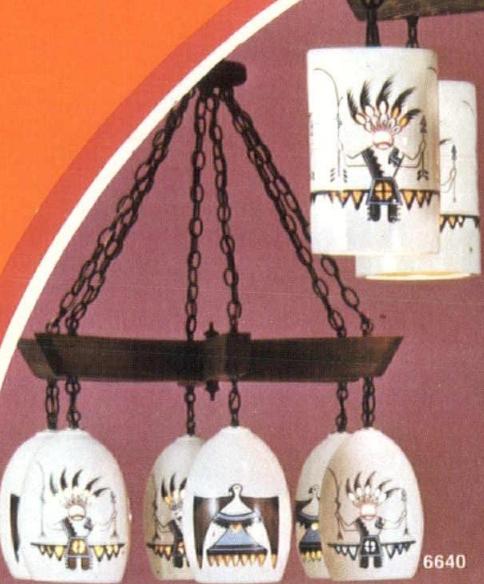
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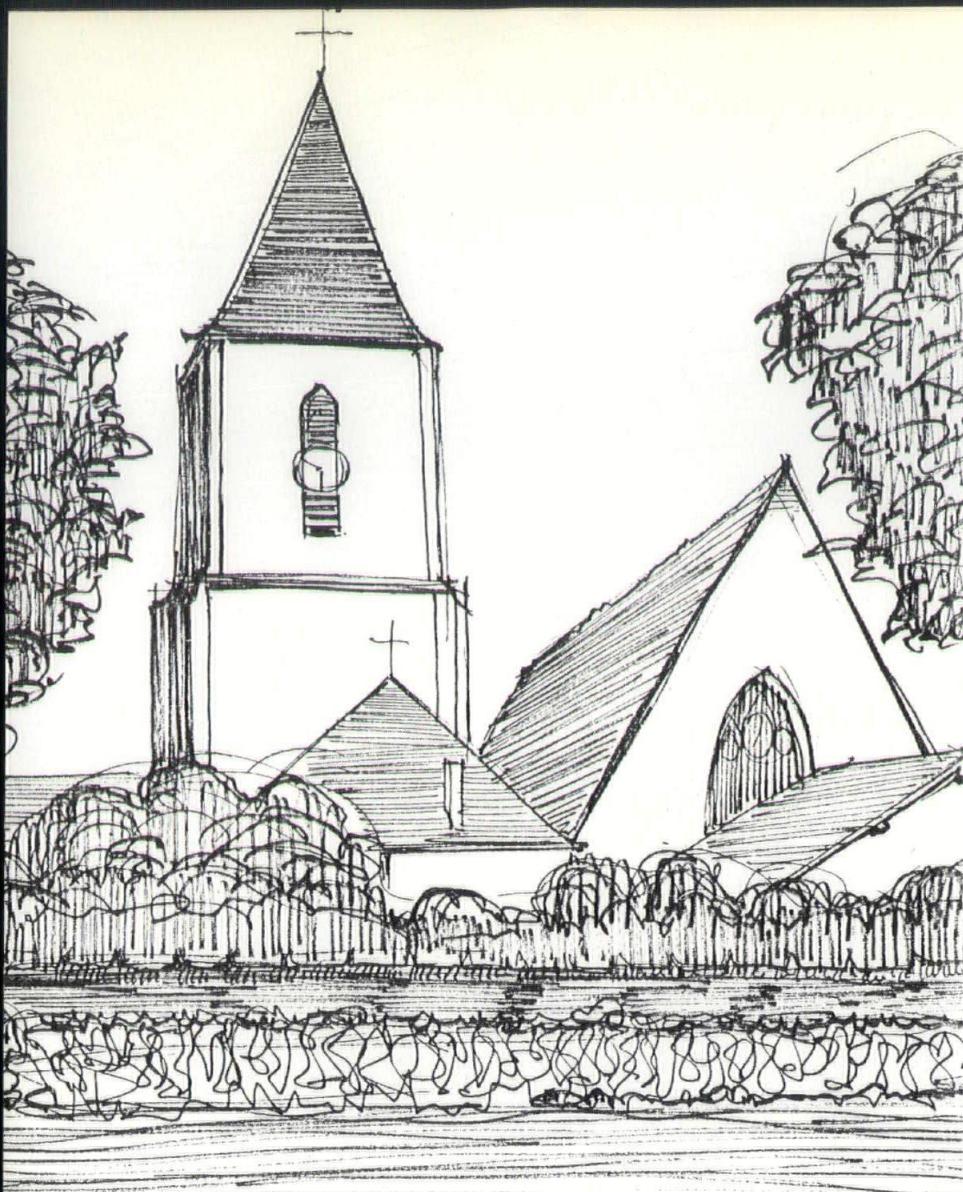


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TL 21	MK, TB, RR		9"	13"
TL 32	KA, TB, RR, BF	All Colors	16"	27"
TL 34	KA, KB	All Colors	20"	35"
TL 82	KA	T, B, Y	9"	28"
TL 334	HD		12½"	18"
TL 335	HD		17"	24"
15	KA, KB, ZA, AZ	All Colors	10"	17"
40	All Designs	All Colors	6½"	9½"
40-3	All Designs	All Colors	13"	
44	KA	All Colors	6"	11"
50	KA, TB, RR, BF	All Colors	5½"	8"
51	All Designs	All Colors	8"	10"
83	KA, AZ	All Colors	5"	12"
PL 101	KA, TB, RR, BF	All Colors	7"	24"
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335	HD		11½"	10"
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# *The summer of 76*

*a trip on  
motor bike  
and with  
sketch pad.*

*by Philippe Register,  
AIA*

*Le 30 Juin. 1976.  
Megille*

Here's an idea for a fun and inexpensive vacation, once you have paid the price to get there. It is an account of my sketching trip to France during the summer of 1976.

Unlike the United States, France, along with other European countries is laced with roads running in all directions connecting cities, towns and villages. Unfortunately most visitors simply do not have the time to peruse the smaller byways. The Michelin large scale maps (scale 1:200,000 or approximately 3½ miles to the inch) are unsurpassed in detailing even the smallest of roads. When one considers that it takes 35 of these maps to cover France, a country the size of Texas (less the Panhandle) and each of these maps is criss-crossed with roads, one begins to get an idea of how many places to see there really are—many more than can be seen in a lifetime. Most of these roads are very narrow and infrequently travelled. They are almost without exception blacktopped,

which brings me to the subject of this article, a trip across France on a "Mobylette," better known as a MOPED in this country.

The sketches which are shown with this article were done on this trip which started in Avignon in the southern part of France and terminated in Paris, a distance of 800 kilometers. Once having decided to make the trip, I started looking for a Mobylette, only to find that renting one was not possible. People apparently don't rent these types of transportation, so rather than abandon the idea, I bought a slightly used Peugeot Mobylette. Insurance was the only legal prerequisite. Licenses are not required for low horse-power two-wheeled units. There was a requirement of wearing a helmet, but this was just good common sense. As things turned out, I was able to sell the Mobylette at the end of the trip for \$20 less than I had paid.

Since I did not have time to make a round trip



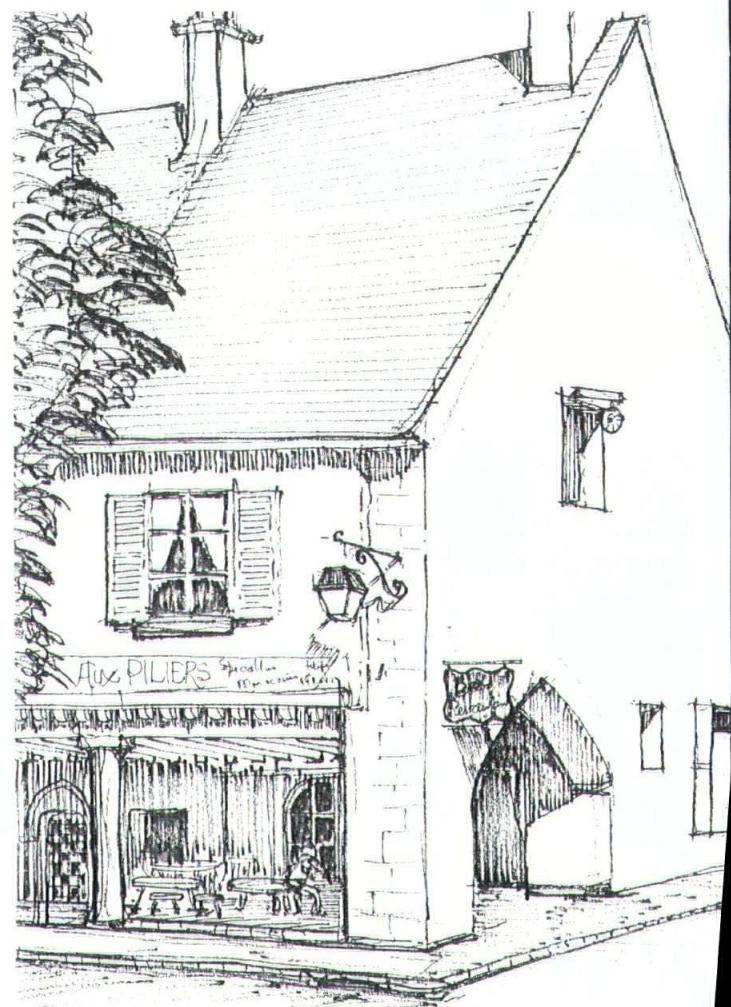
I bought the machine in Versailles where I had been visiting relatives, put it and myself on the train in Paris, and nine hours later demounted in Avignon ready for the great adventure.

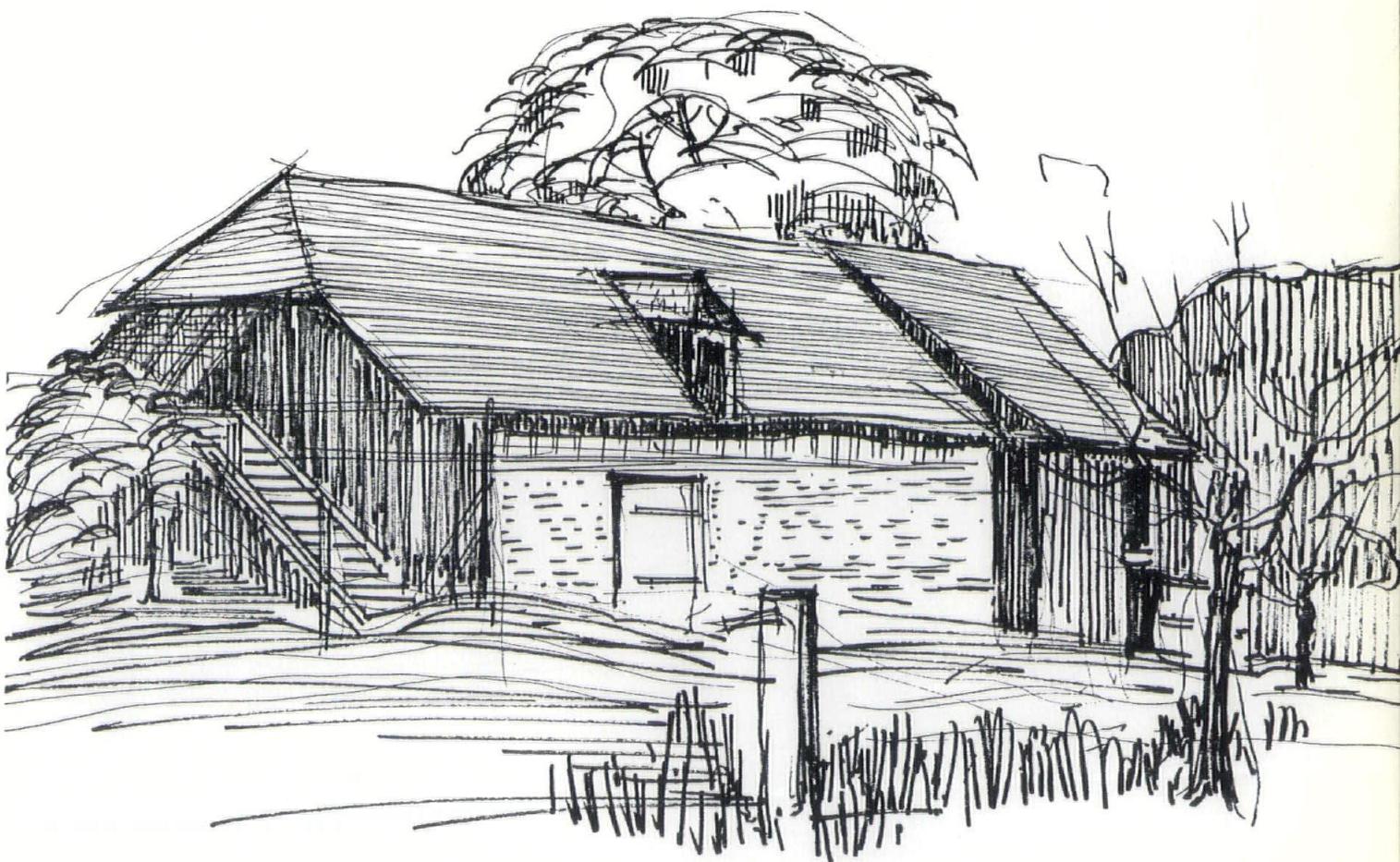
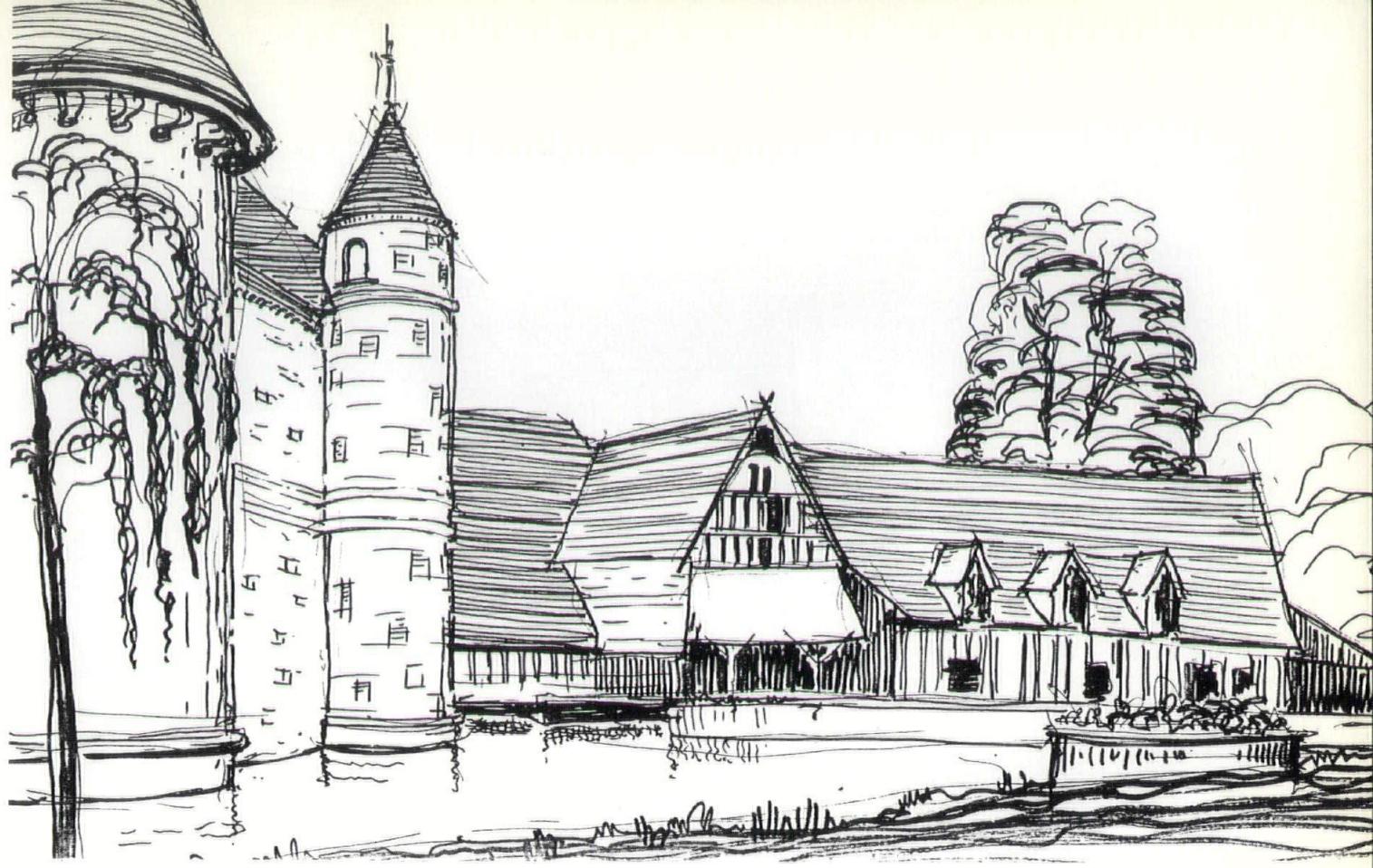
Not to be burdened with too much weight, I carried a minimum of clothing which I placed in a backpack strapped to the rear carrier of the Mobylette. I decided to make my sketches with a felt-tip pen, which, with two 10" x 12" pads comprised all of my art supplies. It did not take me long to realize the necessity of carrying with me certain articles such as a plastic container of bottled water, corkscrew, knife, soap, a towel, a bottle of Woolite, for washing my limited wardrobe each night.

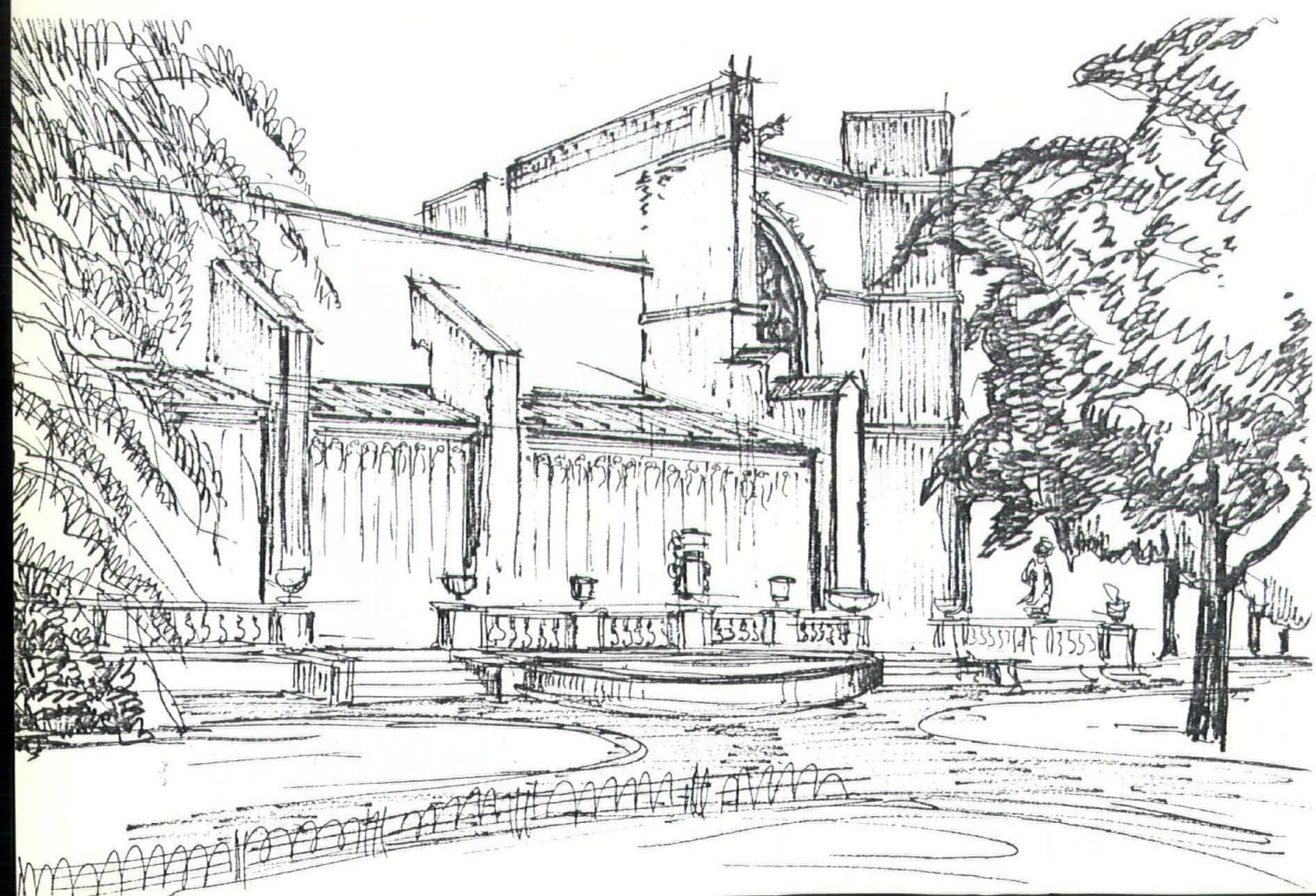
With the Michelin large scale maps, I was able to plot my course a day ahead, allowing for variations if things looked more interesting in other directions. In all cases, I avoided the large (marked in red) roads, and stuck to the (yellow) secondary or (white) tertiary roads. In this way I never went through a town of more than 5000 inhabitants.

A typical day would consist of getting up about 8 to 8:30, ordering the "petit Dejeuner" in my room. The French breakfasts are always the same, varying only in what kind of confiture (jam) one is apt to be served. A large cup of strong coffee, with hot milk if one wants, a huge piece of absolutely fresh bread (in France, the bakeries bake during the night so the bread is fresh in the morning), sometimes a croissant, fresh butter and jam, usually homemade.

I would be on my way on the Mobylette by 9:30, and would cover about 40 to 50 kilometers before the sun got too hot. I would have to be sure to cover a good portion of the distance for that day in the morning as the middle of the day is not good for travel for a number of reasons. One of these is that everyone takes a two to three hour siesta starting at noon, and with the exception of cafes and restaurants everything is closed, and rolling through the main streets of small villages during that time is quite inconsiderate due to the noise generated by the motor. Also if one happens to run out of gas at that time, one







might as well relax in the shade of a tree for several hours. I generally tried to do a sketch during the time between noon and three in the afternoon with a picnic and nap thrown in. I limited the sketches to an hour. Picnics for lunch worked out well. Sometimes during the morning, I would stop at a local grocery store and buy whatever seemed the freshest —tomatoes, cheese, peaches, then to the butcher for some *pâté de foie gras*, sliced tongue or other local product, then to the bakery for the traditional French bread. All this, plus a bottle of local wine was all that I needed, and sometimes more.

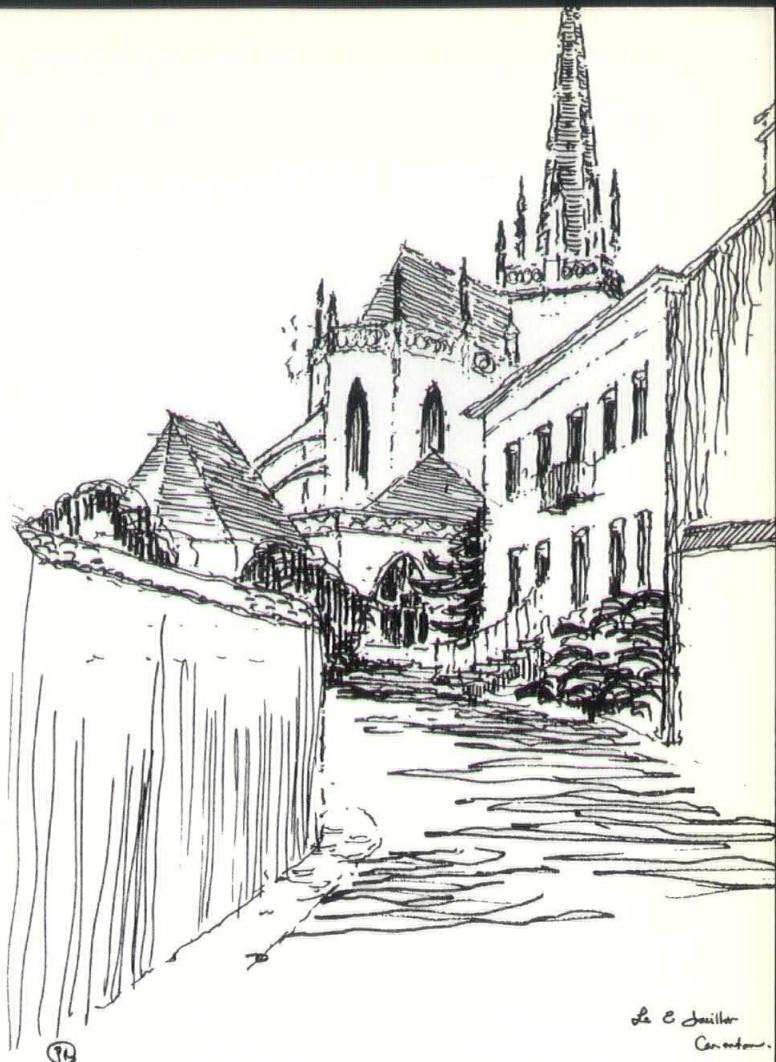
Stopping by the side of the road to rest, sketch, or eat, was simple and convenient. The little villages had lovely parks. Often there was a chateau with magnificent grounds open to the public. There were always landscaped areas around the old churches and monasteries. People seemed to understand my presence there, and generally nodded or said hello.

After resting, I would be off for the second half of the day's travel, by now studying the map a bit more carefully so that I would arrive at a village which would contain a modest hotel for the night. After one experience of waiting too late to find accommodations, I made sure I was at my destination no later than six in the afternoon, as small hotels are prey to a clientele consisting of traveling salesmen and sometimes other tourists, and one can find oneself out in the cold. Also, one does not realize the lateness of the hour in summer. The sun sets at 10:00.

After checking into the local hotel, which usually had a total of 8 to 12 rooms, and sometimes was really the upstairs of a bar or local restaurant, I would take a long walk with sketch pad in hand. Sometimes I would do another sketch. Then back to the hotel, and a small to medium size dinner. Even in the smallest villages, the meal was quite a production, a starting course of *hors d'oeuvres*, a meat course (chicken, veal, small steak), fresh vegetables, cheese, and a basket of fruit. Reading a good book, writing postcards, would complete the day.

From Avignon to the outskirts of Lyon the terrain was fairly level as the route went along the Rhone Valley. Once into the region of Bourgogne, there was a dramatic change in scenery as one climbed into the small mountain ranges north and east of Lyon. Then across the rich farmland of Nievre and Yonne where pastures and cultivated fields of wheat were intermingled with heavy forests. About a hundred kilometers from Paris, one became aware of increased population and more formal landscape such as the Forest of Fontainbleau and more cars, although it was surprisingly easy by this time to keep on the smallest of roads which went their way to the very outskirts of Paris.

The accompanying sketches show the variety of scenes encountered. All over France there are Gothic and Romanesque churches, monasteries and sixteenth and seventeen century chateaux. The nice part about travelling the small roads is that one sees those which are not internationally known, yet which are in the



Le C. Jauillier  
Cenon-sur-Saône

same league with the most celebrated. One sees a country which has not changed over the centuries. An occasional car, high tension wires, a distant train whistle is all that reminds one of the present. Cows and pastoral scenes were everywhere, with sleepy little villages, barns with pitched roofs, stone walls, and most of all quiet, that is, when my *Mobylette* was turned off.

As for cost, it had to be the most economical vacation I have had in many a year. Hotels average 8 to 10 dollars a night, dinner about 5 dollars, breakfast a dollar. Gasoline is expensive, but my machine did not use enough to make this a problem.

I'm sure that my experience could have been repeated in many countries in Europe, England, or other parts of the world. As worthwhile as my trip was, I would not recommend making it longer than ten days. Such things set in as getting rather sore from riding too many kilometers, and being "on the road" alone for that length of time has its limitations. It might be more of a lark with another person or three or four, provided everyone had the same objective. Sketching really made the trip for me as I was able to spend the time without distraction, and one learns from sketching in a way no other medium can provide. I hope to do it again one of these days.

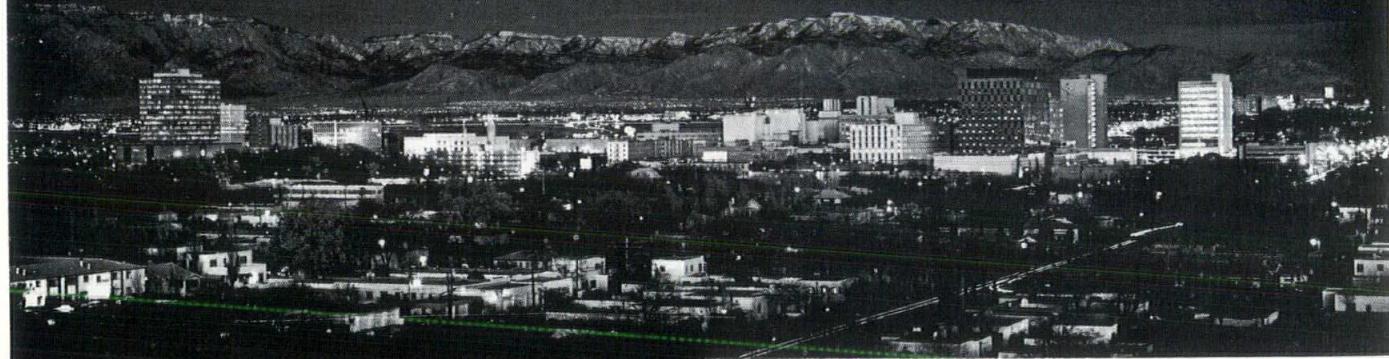
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school center in Seattle, Wash. He has drafted environmental analyses and impact statements for private resorts, subdivisions, public utilities and national parks.

With Alley-Connell and Associates Mr. Serven will oversee a number of planning activities. He is in charge of the firm's projects involving multiple stage building programs and the use of open space. He received his bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from the University of Florida.

### **SCHOOL ENERGY COSTS INCREASED 150 PCT. IN 5 YEARS; THERE IS SOLUTION**

Public elementary and secondary schools will spend about \$50 on energy for each student enrolled in the current academic year. That's a stiff bill, (over \$2.2 billion nationally) and any conservation efforts to reduce consumption will benefit taxpayers in every school district, and, of course, the nation's over-all energy program.

In 1972-73, the year before the oil embargo, the cost of energy to the average school district was under \$20 per student. Since that year school administrators have watched their energy bills increase 150%. The high cost of energy

is significant in the over-all budget because energy represents between 15% and 20% of a school's non-salary operating costs. No one can accurately predict future energy costs, although some energy watchers say we can expect annual increases of between 12% and 15%. This means that the cost of energy will double in less than 7 years.

Unfortunately, schools have not done as much as they could to conserve energy and money. There are two principal reasons for this. One is that conservation has a low priority when such critical issues as teacher contracts, enrollment decline, student competency, and vandalism demand so much attention. The other reason is that schools are not exempt from the national confusion over energy. This is especially true with respect to the costs of mounting a conservation program. The question, "How much will it cost to save energy?" has not had a very clear answer.

However, the answer is simple and direct for with minimum expenditure schools could save 30% of their energy bill. By using school buildings efficiently and by having a building "tune-up," similar to a car tune-up, savings of 20% to 30% may be realized.

Congress is considering an en-

ergy measure that will make capital funds available for schools that have completed their operational improvements. Such capital investments are expected to result in additional energy savings of 20%.

If all public schools were operating efficiently, the national savings would be about \$665 million, split almost evenly between fuel and electricity. At present, energy accounts for three cents of every school dollar, and one cent of that is usually wasted due to poor construction, inefficient heating systems, overlighting, and poorly trained personnel.

Higher energy costs are inevitable but their impact on a school budget can be minimized if the school administration develops an energy conservation program that includes setting an energy reduction goal such as lowering consumption by 20% during the first year. A well thought out program enlisting the support of students, teachers, custodians, administrators, and parents not only saves money, but can also serve as an example for eliminating energy waste in non-school activities.

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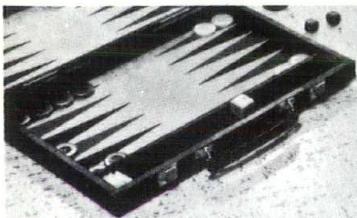
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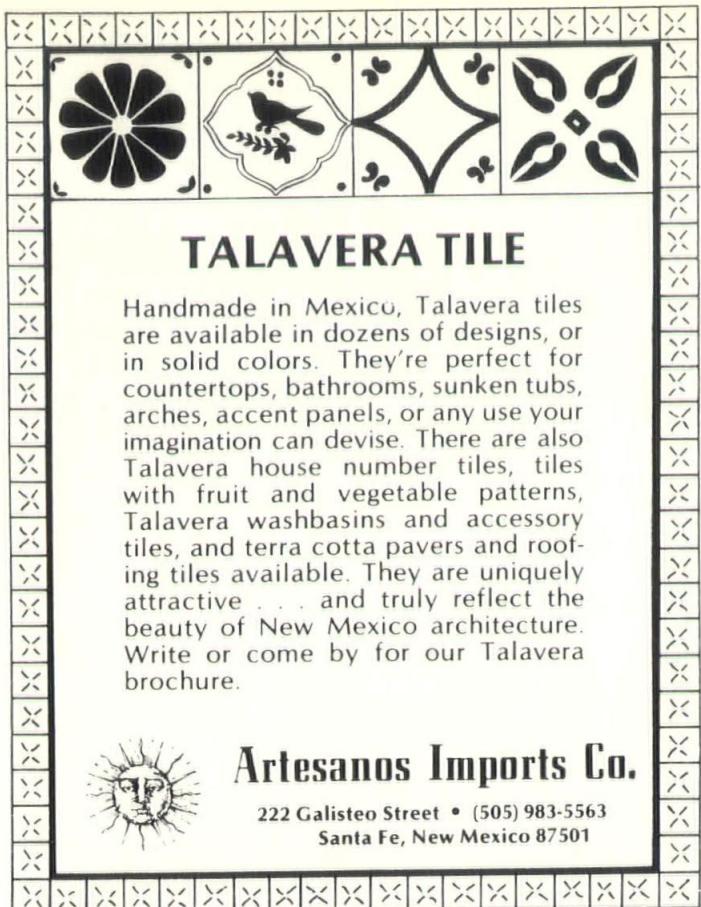
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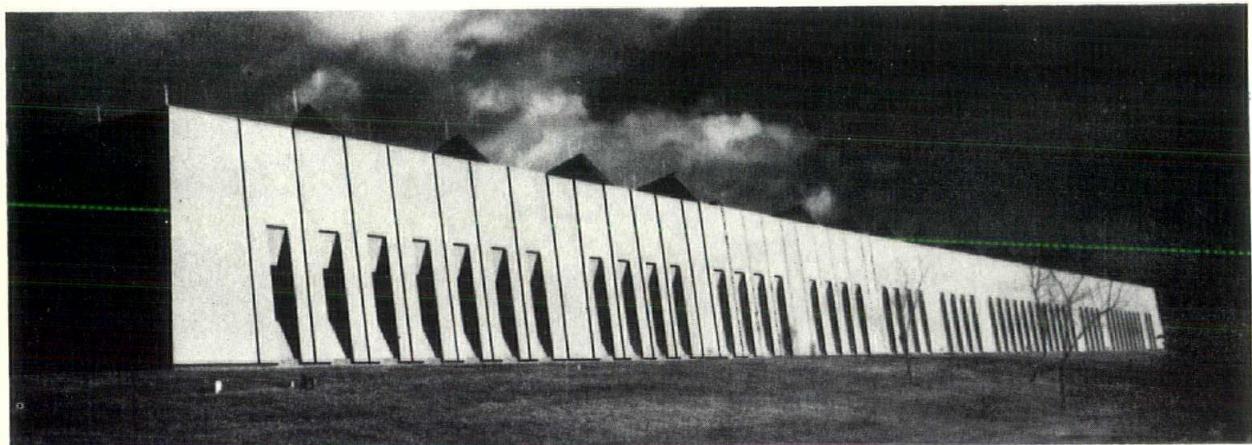
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